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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES

February 5, 1974

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EAST GERMANY

Trade Conference with Westerners Opens

A three-day roundtable conference between Business International and East German officials concerned with the promotion of trade opened in East Berlin on February 4. Orville Freeman, President of Business International, heads the foreign participants, comprising presidents, vice presidents, and board members of important US and West European enterprises. GDR Premier Sindermann told the group further steps toward detente have a favorable effect on the expansion of foreign economic activities. He also said that East Germany plans to expand substantially its economic relations with non-socialist countries.

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POLAND

Good, But Not Good Enough

A National Economic Conference to boost the 1974 development plan commenced yesterday with kickoff speeches by party boss Gierek and government chief Jaroszewicz. Addressing a galaxy of industrial leaders, Gierek briefly extolled the present pace of progress before launching

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into his favorite theme--the improvement of living standards for the average man. The most important task, he said, was to promote agricultural efficiency. In a somewhat tougher vein, Jaroszewicz charged that some enterprises were failing to meet quotas, producing poor quality goods, using raw materials haphazardly, and demonstrating little initiative. He attributed these sins to weak plant leadership and poor planning at the administrator's level.

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Cultural Agreements

Although Budapest continues to drag its feet on negotiating a cultural agreement with the US, it may be laying some of the necessary groundwork. Last fall, the Hungarians announced the opening of a lavish new Soviet cultural facility in downtown Budapest, and yesterday the top party and state leadership visited the building. In a short speech, Kadar noted that the facility had already lived up to expectations. Soviet Ambassador Pavlov thanked the Hungarians for their assistance in establishing and running the building, and claimed that over 200,000 people had already visited it.

Meanwhile, the Hungarians apparently are pressing the Norwegians to negotiate a cultural agreement. The Norwegians have demurred.

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